

THE HOME
SUNSHINE
SERIES

BOOKS FOR GIRLS



DAISY-
DINGLE



BY ROBINA F. HARDY





DAISY DINGLE.



DAISY AT CROSSFORD FARM.

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DAISY DINGLE.

I.—THE SQUIRE'S BOY.

“The sweetest flower that ever grew
Beside a cottage door.”—WORDSWORTH.

It was only the milk-jug that overturned; that was all. And yet good Mrs. Ridley felt her nerves so shaken, and was indeed so “put about,” as she said, that she didn't know what answer to give the squire's boy, who had just come with a basket and a message.

For the jar had tipped over suddenly with a smart crack, and besides breaking itself, had thrown all the rich, new butter-

milk over her fresh-sanded kitchen-floor, a thing which vexed Mrs. Ridley not a little. And then the cat, a quiet, composed animal in general, had got such a start that it flew out at the window like a mad creature, causing the huge flower-pot containing Mrs. Ridley's pet geranium to rock backward and forward like the pendulum of a clock.

The farmer's wife was a quick, lively, impulsive little woman, very often in what her husband called a "fluff," and on some days, he averred, no sooner out of one fluff than into another.

At last, however, she found time to attend to the squire's boy.

"Why, Davie, what a tall boy you do grow, to be sure. Farmer Ridley would never know his little herd-boy again if he met you. And so Mrs. Parry wants

more eggs? Deary-deary me! ten dozen again this week! I don't believe we can give her the half of them, Davie. Eggs *is* eggs, and no mistake, now-a-days. Even my old gray Dorking, as never failed me in the worst of times, has gone off somewhere, and is laying astray, I do believe. But sit down a bit, Davie, and eat some gingerbread—do—to keep you from wearying, and I'll just run round and ask Tib Trainer what she thinks."

All the time Mrs. Ridley spoke she had been busy wiping up the milk, settling the geranium, and generally tidying up her kitchen after the late terrible disaster. Now, however, she set off, basket in hand, for the poultry-yard, popping a huge slice of gingerbread into Davie's hand as she left, which she bade him "eat to keep himself from wearying."

Davie Garth, a well-grown boy of twelve or thirteen, with a nice open countenance and rosy-cheeked as an apple, sat gazing into the fire in a very abstracted fashion, and did not seem at all hungry that morning. And so, on Mrs. Ridley's return with a moderate supply of dainty white eggs, she twitted him with being too well fed at the squire's now-a-days to care for the farmhouse cakes he had once been so fond of.

"Times are changed indeed, Davie," cried she, "when my own old herd-boy turns up his nose at my good gingerbread! But you may live to be glad of a worse diet than that, my fine young gentleman."

Poor Davie's cheeks flushed deeper crimson than ever at this somewhat unmerited rebuke. He had been long a herd-boy on Crossford farm, and knew the sharpness of Mrs. Ridley's tongue pretty well; but he

was aware also that her "bark was worse than her bite," as the people of the neighbourhood expressed it.

"'Tain't that at all, ma'am," at last he stammered out—" 'tain't that at all, I do assure ye. But I was savin' it for a poor little lass in the dingle down by, that has had no meat for ever so long, and has been left behind by her folk some way. She was near breakin' her heart when I came through; and I told her to keep up her spirit a bit, for you was main kind, and was sure to give me summat."

Davie was quite out of breath when he came to the end of his rather perplexing narrative; for the necessity of making a clean breast of it all, and so disarming Mrs. Ridley's wrath, was strong upon him now, though at first his design had been to carry the gingerbread quietly away to his new

friend, saying nothing about her to any one.

Perhaps it was as well that the latter plan fell through.

“A little lass!” exclaimed Mrs. Ridley—
“left alone in the dingle without food! Her folks away without her! Why, Davie, thou art surely dreaming! How old is she?”

“About four, I should say, ma’am. She be quite a little thing.”

“But how came she there, Davie? Didn’t you ask her that?”

“She said her mother was coming back for her,” answered the boy; “but that was all I could make out of what she said. Summat too about a big cart, and a cruel man who wouldn’t take her with him.”

“Poor little creature! Some worthless

father and mother, you may be sure," cried good Mrs. Ridley, her motherly heart melting at this picture of distress. "They've left her behind, as sure as fate, just to get rid of the child; and that story about her mother coming back'll be all a make-up, depend upon it."

Davie nodded assent, but shoved the gingerbread quietly into his pocket, as much as to say he should stick to his plan all the same.

"Well, well, it ain't the little one's fault, Davie, and I'm main sorry for her, I can tell you. I think I'll take a step down with you myself, and see what can be done with her. Let's see; here's some new milk in this pitcher, and I'll pop some scones into my basket. That'll do famously. Now, Davie, are you ready?"

Davie Garth started to his feet with the

greatest alacrity, and prepared to follow his former mistress. Mrs. Ridley, however, made him go on in front, declaring she would soon be out of breath, and Davie would have to help her over the steep bit of the hill, and across the stepping-stones at the ford.

II.—IN THE DINGLE.

It was a cold March morning, and the roads were very dirty and slippery. So between fighting with the baffling breeze, and trying to keep a firm footing on that up-and-down, broken pathway, Mrs. Ridley never before found the way to the dingle half so long. But they arrived at last; and there, sure enough, in a snug hollow at the foot of an old ash-tree, sat the prettiest little girl Mrs. Ridley had ever seen—a small

child about four or five years of age, just as Davie Garth had stated. She was nicely and carefully dressed, and had altogether a well-kept, well-trained look about her—not like the children of those wandering tramps and tinkers who were one of the plagues of the neighbourhood. This could be no case of fraud and imposition, but one of genuine distress, the farmer's wife concluded.

“My poor little dear!” she exclaimed, as soon as she gathered breath; “what are you doing here all by yourself? Tell me, my pretty little pet! You shall have some nice warm milk presently, to bring back the roses to your cheeks.”

“I’se waiting for mother,” said the child, in a clear, silvery voice, and looking up quite frankly and trustfully. But indeed Mrs. Ridley’s face was one to inspire confidence in anybody. “I’se waiting; for

mother is *sure* to come back again ; but, oh dear me ! it is a long, long time now since she went away."

And here the tears gathered thickly in the bright blue eyes, and the child looked wistfully along the woodland road.

"*Of course* she will, dear. Something must have hindered her," said Mrs. Ridley cheerfully, while she busied herself in pouring out the milk into a little mug she had brought with her, and finding a nice soft bit of scone for the little traveller. "But what is your name, my little dear, and how old are you?"

"I'se Daisy," said the child briefly, "and I'se four—no, *five* years old. Mother says I'se be big girl when father comes home."

"Is he away too? where did *he* go to?" asked Mrs. Ridley.

Daisy shook her head.

“Fa’, fa’ away. Mother not fa’ away though. She is just *zere* ;” and she pointed with her little finger to the open ground beyond the dingle.

The “dingle” was, as some of our young readers may not know, a wooded ravine through which wandered a tiny stream, and which was thickly overhung with interlacing branches, now very bare and wintry looking. Still, there was a warmth and a shelter in this spot which were not to be found in the open fields on this cold March morning.

“Why did she go there?” asked Davie, who had been intently watching his new friend, and rejoicing in her evident enjoyment of the refreshment and sympathy he had brought to her.

But Daisy only shook her head, and to all other queries, of which many were

started by Mrs. Ridley and Davie time about, the same unsatisfactory answer was returned. Clearly, there was no more to be learned from the foundling herself. They must wait for the dilatory mother if they wanted to know more about her. But she could not be left in that dingle alone again, Mrs. Ridley declared ; she must come home with her, and wait till mother should return.

Davie began to have sad misgivings as to Mrs. Parry's views of his conduct in being so long on his errand, and felt that he must tear himself away from this interesting scene as fast as possible. So he trotted off to Squire Bolton's manor house, known as "the Hall" in that neighbourhood, carrying with him his six dozen of eggs, and the wonderful story of little Daisy in the dingle.

But poor Mrs. Ridley had hard work

after he went to persuade Daisy to leave the spot where "mother" had left her.

"No, no!" she cried piteously; "Daisy must wait! Mother will come again. Daisy must not go away; mother said so."

"Don't cry, my dear!" cried Mrs. Ridley, in as great distress as the child herself—"don't cry, and I'll see what can be done. But, dear me, it's high time my goodman's dinner was being minded, and things are sure to go wrong if I'm any longer away. Do come on, my pretty little Daisy, and I'll send down a messenger to tell mother to come for you to the farm, and she'll have a nice warm cup of tea; she shall."

This comforting assurance at last prevailed, and Mrs. Ridley and little Daisy made the best of their way homewards, leaving Daisy's little straw hat hanging on a branch of the old tree, with a message

rudely scrawled on the paper lining with Mrs. Ridley's big red-chalk dairy-pencil, telling where the child was to be found.

It took the pair no little time to reach the cozy shelter of Crossford farm-house, especially as Davie Garth's helping hand was wanting now. But before the household had missed the active care and superintendence of its mistress, Mrs. Ridley had renewed her preparations for dinner, rekindled the smouldering fire, and made things look bright and comfortable again.

But her little guest refused to be comforted by any of these things, and only kept on wearily crying for her mother to return. Poor Mrs. Ridley was getting quite put out about it, when, fortunately, nature came to her aid. In the warm glow of that cozy fireside Daisy, overworn with travel, fatigue, and excitement, quickly yielded to

the subtle influence of sleep ; and as a large draught of rich new milk had fully satisfied the cravings of hunger, she was likely to sleep sound.

In this happy change of circumstances, Mrs. Ridley lost no time in gently undressing her, and putting her to sleep in a corner of her own bed, dressed warmly in a little flannel gown belonging to one of her own grandchildren.

How neat and tidy were all the little garments composing Daisy's underclothing ! Mrs. Ridley was anew impressed with the idea that this was "*somebody's child*," whoever that somebody might be. Yet there were no fine trinkets about Daisy, nor any marks upon her dress which might lead one to suppose her the child of gentlefolks. Only her own name, "Daisy," and that probably a pet one, was worked neatly in

silk on each tiny article of dress. And there was tied round her neck by an old blue ribbon, very faded and worn, a small gold locket, so simple and unadorned in its appearance that Mrs. Ridley judged it to be not of real gold, but one of those cheap fancy things sold at country fairs in great profusion, and supposed it had been given to the little girl to amuse her.

“Well, but it’s all she has in this world to call her own besides her bits of clothes,” sighed the good woman, “and I’ll put it carefully past, so that if her wicked mother ever does come back again to claim her, she won’t be able to say that she lost a penny-’orth of trash through Mary Ridley; that she won’t. But I do believe she be gone off on the tramp, and has left this poor little innocent to be picked up by anybody who likes. It’s a wicked world this, to be sure; and

even if she has been a lady, as I make little doubt she must have been from the look of these clothes, still it's likely she has taken to bad ways, and come down in the world, all along of drink or such like folly. Ay, ay! it's not only the poor folks as is to be blamed for that. They tell me some fine ladies in the big towns are as bad as old Matty Myles at the turnpike yonder—only it's grand wine they likes, and not coarse gin, like Matty. Dear, dear! what a pity, to be sure!”

So Mrs. Ridley's tongue ran on, while arranging little Daisy's things and watching her quiet, peaceful sleep. The despised locket was put into a drawer, one of the few lockfast places Crossford farm-house could boast, while her neat little garments were folded tidily and laid upon a chair by the bedside. And thus were all Daisy's

worldly possessions suitably arranged and deposited in safe keeping.

Only the little round straw-hat alone remained out in the world and unprovided for. It still hung on the branch of the big ash-tree in the dingle, holding the scrawled message forth to wandering winds and fleeting birds; for, alas! no mother's eyes were destined ever to rest on that message, which, indeed, would have been a very difficult one for the most eager and acute eyes to decipher. Mrs. Ridley's dairy-pencil was blunt, and her hand was unused to any penmanship but that of rudely chalking the date on some precious setting of eggs, or the exact quantity of the week's butter, according to Tib Trainer's minutest calculation.

Well, the hat might swing and sway mournfully on the bough, but the little

owner lay safe and warm, sleeping under the shadow of a kindly roof-tree and the motherly eyes of its mistress. "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

III.—THE WAGGONER'S LOAD.

THAT very afternoon a heavy-laden waggon was slowly making its way along the high-road which, passing Crossford farm and the dingle on the left, leads right on to the quaint old city of Chester. Simon Wade, the waggoner, seemed in no hurry that day, and yet the good man was in great perplexity about something, and longed sorely for advice; only it never occurred to him to hasten the movements of Dick and Star, his four-footed assistants.

"Zounds!" said Simon to himself repeatedly, as he rubbed his shaggy head;

“folk would say I had murdered that poor wench—her lyin’ still as a stock there, not able to tell who she be, or whence she come, nor nothin’. An’ me as can only say it was a touch from my right w’eel as sent her over like a nine-pin! Not a hair else to account for it. They won’t believe it, the Chester folks, will they? Ah well, I’ll land her at the hospital, if so be she be still in life when we gets in. And if she ben’t—zounds, there’s the rub! What’s poor old Simon to do *then*, I’d like to know?”

Perhaps had Simon been less anxious about himself, and more so about his patient, it would have been as well for the poor sufferer lying speechless under the cover of his waggon. She was a fair, fragile creature, still young, though bearing the marks of much care, toil, and suffering. By

some unaccountable accident, she had been rudely knocked down by this very waggon at a turn of the road, and striking her head sharply against a projecting stone, some severe, probably mortal injury ensued. She was neatly and respectably dressed, a wedding-ring glimmered on her thin left hand, and even on the still, motionless face a look of perfect trustworthiness and candour was manifest.

At length the rays of the westering sun fell straight on old Simon's face, as he stood smiling to himself at the city hospital gates. He rang the great bell, and then rubbed his hands with gleeful satisfaction.

“Heaven be praised! she be still alive, and none of them can say I murdered her, anyway! Poor wench! she be mutterin' to herself now, but I can't make out one

word. They'll know wot to do with the likes o' her here, I reckon. All I want to know is, was it the *w'eel* or the *shaft* as knocked her over?"

Doctors and nurses were in readiness, and most mercifully and skilfully was the poor creature now tended. Relieved from the painful jolting of the waggon, she could now open her eyes and make some feeble sign; but no voice came from the parched white lips, and no writing was found on her person testifying who she might be. Her case was one of concussion of the brain, the doctors said, and she must be kept as quiet as possible. That was nearly all that could be done.

Nurse Evans was appointed to watch her all that night. Early in the morning a change took place; the patient looked round her consciously, and even acutely. Speech

was partially restored. Nurse Evans bent over to hear her low whisper.

“I am dying, I think?” she said questioningly; and the nurse, kind as she was, could not contradict her. “My poor little child!” she moaned. “Lost, lost in that lonely wood! Oh, let me rise and go to seek for her!”

The nurse patted her as she might have done to an infant.

“Hush, hush, dear,” she said; “you are very weak. You must not even speak. Your little lamb will be cared for. Trust to the Good Shepherd.”

“I do trust Him,” she answered feebly. “I have no other trust.”

For some time she relapsed into a half-conscious state.

“Daisy! my poor little Daisy!” she often moaned. “O Charles, come quick and find

her! I only left her for a few minutes to get food for her; she was so weary, poor little child!—O Good Shepherd, hear Thou the bleating of Thy wandering lamb! Bring her safe into Thy fold!”

It was bright day when the end came. The doctor was standing by her bed.

“Tell me your name, my poor girl,” he said kindly, for she looked almost a child as she lay there; “and tell me where you left your little one. We will do all we can for her.”

“Margaret Gerard is my name,” she whispered almost with her last breath; “and the child is—yonder. Oh, where, where is it? In the dingle beside—”

This last effort was too much for her, and she lay back on her pillow—dead!

IV.—FOUND AT LAST.

It was not very difficult for the doctor to identify, by the aid of Simon the waggoner, the little girl found by Davie Garth and Mrs. Ridley with the lost child of his poor patient. Crossford farm was only some dozen miles from Chester, after all. Still, that did not shed much light on her origin or history. Fortunately for poor little Daisy, Mrs. Ridley was in no mood to part with her. The little creature had already twined herself about that motherly heart with no slender cords. The farmer himself made a little cart for her, which was drawn by a tame goat, as he had often done long ago for his own children, who were all grown up and out in the world now doing for themselves.

So Daisy stayed at Crossford farm, and

grew up among its rustic duties and pleasures, learning to help "granny," as she called Mrs. Ridley, in washing dishes and working away with milk-pans and butter-pats. A pretty child she was, and as sweet-tempered as could be wished. Everybody about the place knew and liked little Daisy Dingle, as she came to be called, instead of "Gerard," which was an unfamiliar name.

One thing Mrs. Ridley never could get Daisy to take thoroughly into her head—and that was her poor mother's fate. Of course they had made the story as little painful to the child as possible; but Daisy knew her mother had met with a dreadful accident, only a few minutes after leaving her in the dingle, and that in consequence she died. But at first that word had no meaning for Daisy; she only kept saying, over and over again, "Mother died; but

mother will come back again—she will come.” No one liked to vex her, and so, as the days and months went on, Daisy got this notion firmly fixed in her little curly head—mother would come back again.

Davie Garth’s story had been heard with much interest at the Hall that day by all Squire Bolton’s family and visitors, while the servants made quite a romance of it; and even Mrs. Parry the housekeeper forgot her annoyance about the scant supply of eggs, and never dreamt of scolding Davie for being so long on the road.

Davie remained one of Daisy Dingle’s fast friends; and by-and-by, when he grew older, and went as under-gardener to Castle Belford, the child missed him sadly. But Davie Garth was destined still to be her friend even in that strange place.

Lady Belford was a fragile, delicate in-

valid, who passed most of her better hours in the beautiful gardens and conservatories of her fine mansion-house. In this way she came often to talk with and know the histories of the young gardeners who assisted her own well-skilled Stanton. Davie Garth was of a frank and communicative disposition, and it was not long before her ladyship had learned all about Crossford farm and little Daisy Dingle.

“What an odd name to give her,” said her ladyship; “but—oh yes, I see now. It is because you found her in one. But has she no right surname? Was her poor mother unable to tell even that?”

“Oh no,” said Davie, who had forgotten this part of his story; “she said, just before she died, that her own name was Gerard—Margaret Gerard; so we suppose little Daisy was named after her, for your ladyship

knows that 'daisies' and 'marguerites' are all the same thing."

Davie blushed as he displayed this piece of learning, and at another time Lady Belford would have been amused at her young gardener's evident pride in his own botanic lore; but now—what *could* be the matter? She gave a little scream, as if some one had hurt her, and lay back in her garden-chair, looking very pale indeed. Davie was very much alarmed, and offered to go for water.

"No, no," said her ladyship; "I will be well again presently. Stay and tell me more about this little girl; I must and will know every particular. How old is she? Now, David, think and make quite sure of what you say."

As she spoke she revived, and drew forth a set of ivory tablets from her pocket, which she eagerly consulted. Davie was very

much alarmed by her strange manner, and even thought of running to the house for help, as he was convinced Lady Belford had gone suddenly out of her mind. Fortunately he did not do so, for this was quite a mistake.

As minutely and faithfully as he could, he stated every little particular regarding Daisy—her age, as nearly as could be guessed; the few articles found upon her; the broken words of her dying mother, as he had often heard them repeated. Lady Belford listened with intense interest, and noted down all these things as he went on. She was quite calm by the time all this was finished, and drawing a letter from the silken bag by her side, said quietly,—

“David Garth, I am going to place some confidence in you, of which your open expression tells me you are not unworthy.

I am sure you will not gossip about the matter until I give you leave."

As earnestly as words could do, Davie assured his dear mistress she might rely upon his prudence in the matter.

"It is enough," she answered. "Now listen. My name is Gerard—my family name, I mean, before I married. I have a brother—Charles Gerard—once a reckless, foolish, miserable man, but now, thank God! restored to a better state of mind. A ruined man still, indeed, but one most anxious to undo the evil he has done, the misery he has caused, if that be possible. Alas! all cannot be undone. Twelve years ago he left a young and most amiable wife and a helpless infant, a girl—left them, to follow his own evil genius in a foreign land. He promised to return, and meant it at the time, but soon forgot his promise. *Now* he

is on his homeward voyage, eager to seek the long-deserted wife and child. Your story assures me that he will only find the grave of Margaret Clifford, his beautiful and unfortunate wife ; but that in little Daisy Dingle he may yet find—his child. I must immediately proceed to Crossford farm in person, and there examine the few relics the child brought with her. If I am not much mistaken, I can set this matter at rest before my unhappy brother's arrival. Now I must leave you, David ; but if you keep my counsel, I shall not forget the service."

The very next day a splendid carriage drove up at the simple white gate of Crossford farm. A delicate looking lady in rich attire was handed from it, and came with homely, frank address to Mrs. Ridley's door. The good woman received her with all her

own kindly courtesy. A tall, fair-haired girl sat by the window of the bright kitchen, sewing, beside the big geranium.

“How like! how *very* like!” exclaimed Lady Belford. “You are Daisy Gerard, I am sure.”

“Well, we call her Daisy Dingle for common, my lady,” said Mrs. Ridley, all in a flutter at the unexpected occurrence; “for she was found in the dingle yonder, sure enough, and a blessing she has been to this house ever since.”

“Oh, I know all about that,” said the lady; and very soon the whole story was disclosed.

Lady Belford held in her hand her brother's letter, giving many little details, which, even by Daisy's childish recollections, were easily converted into proofs of her identity.

“David tells me there was a little locket tied round the child’s neck when you found her,” said Lady Belford—“a very plain gold locket. Have you still got it? can you show it to me?”

The lady was strangely agitated while she said this, and Mrs. Ridley and Daisy were alike surprised by her request. The locket was certainly not lost; it had long ago been handed over to Daisy’s keeping, as one of the few relics of her unknown and mysterious past, and as such was still treasured by her, along with various little gifts and keepsakes she had since received from the folks at Crossford farm. But she, too, had remained in the belief that it was but a bauble, precious only in her own eyes. Now, however, she produced it quickly from her little work-box, and gave it into Lady Belford’s trembling hand.

To the great astonishment of all three, the lady touched a hidden spring, and the plain-looking locket started open, revealing a very finely chased piece of work, set round with small pearls, and showing the interwoven names of Charles Gerard and Margaret Clifford.

The last link was now discovered. There could be no possible doubt that Daisy Dingle was indeed the lost child of whom Lady Belford and her brother, Mr. Gerard, were in search.

“I remember well the day,” said Lady Belford, “when my brother brought this locket to his sweet young bride. We laughed at its plain appearance outside; but she said it would suit her better than any more showy ornament. How little I then dreamt of the strange, sad fate before that happy, light-hearted girl! She so keenly resented

our remonstrances with her foolish husband as to the reckless career he was beginning, that she became completely estranged from us, never seeking our help, as you know, even in her sorest extremity. His desertion of her must at last have opened her eyes; and yet, even then, I suppose she did not quite give up all hope in him."

In due time Daisy Gerard went to Castle Belford, to await the anxious moment of meeting with her erring but repentant father. It was a meeting full of very varied emotions.

How could she love him as she would have done had he never strayed so far from the path of right and honour? It was simply impossible; and yet, as time went on, she grew more tender and pitiful towards him, seeing his own deep dejection and remorse for the past always weighing down

his spirit. Daisy felt, too, that in helping and cheering this poor broken-down man she was but fulfilling her mother's wishes, and doing what that dear mother herself would so gladly have done.

Mr. Gerard wisely left his daughter under the care of Lady Belford for a few years, till her education was completed, and she was fitted to occupy the sphere in society to which she was henceforth to belong. One solemn promise, however, Daisy extracted from him, and that was, that part of every year was to be spent under the dear familiar shelter of her early home; while even at Castle Belford a pet lamb played with her in the fields, which was sent just to keep her in mind of Crossford farm.

It would be difficult to count how many times Mrs. Ridley told over the events of

that wonderful day when Daisy was found by Davie Garth and herself crying in the dingle: the sudden fall of the milk-jug, the hasty flight of the black cat, and the pendulum-like vibrations of her big geranium-pot, all had their due place in the narrative. Many were the tokens of affection and gratitude surrounding the good woman, from the child whom she had then taken to her motherly heart; but she always declared that the best reward of all was the glad sunshine which little Daisy herself had brought into her adopted home.

“Grand lady as she might become,” quoth Mrs. Ridley, “she would never be fairer or dearer in the eyes of her old friends at Crossford farm than she had been as little Daisy Dingle, with nothing in the world but her own bright eyes and loving heart.”

“And remember, grannie,” Daisy would reply, “I am your own Daisy Dingle still.”

Yet her own mother's memory had ever the first place in Daisy's estimation.

Often, too, she dwelt on her own childish belief that, whatever happened, her mother would come back for her. Long cherished and long deferred, that hope was at last transferred from the shifting sands of earth to the sure rest of heaven. And in allusion to that hope, Daisy caused to be put upon the pretty marble cross erected by her father and herself in Chester Cemetery, “Them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him when he comes.”

Mr. Gerard took a pretty villa in the neighbourhood of that quaint old town round which his daughter's affections centred so strongly. It was within easy reach of

Crossford farm, and that was one great advantage in Daisy's eyes. Here Lady Belford would often come to visit them, and she aided her brother in many philanthropic and benevolent schemes, in which he now sought to employ the "remnant of a wasted span." There was a Retreat for Convalescents, and a Boys' Brigade and "Orphan Home," the latter having Daisy's especial care and attention; so that with all these things to look after time never hung heavy on the Gerards' hands, nor did they ever wish for a happier lot.

Have we forgotten one other old friend who often found his way to see them, sharing in their happiness, and always remembered with gratitude? That was Davie Garth. He is head-gardener now at Castle Belford, and has the prettiest cottage cov-

ered with roses and honeysuckle, a nice wife, and some fine children, who play about the grounds, and are great favourites with her ladyship. One little girl, prettier than all the rest, is perhaps the greatest favourite, for she has been christened

DAISY DINGLE.



